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A Plain and Familiar

DISCOURSE,

Humbly dedicated to the Reverend

Dr. *SACHEVERILL*;

And not only to Him,

BUT TO

All the MINISTERS;

That Presume to make it their

BUSINESS and DESIGN

TO

Sow Discord among Brethren.

Matthew the 5th and the 22d.

*But I say unto you, That whosoever is Angry
with his Brother without a Cause, is in Dan-
ger of the Judgment.*

London: Printed and Sold by *H. Hills*, in
Black-Fryars, near the Water-side, 1710.

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Sach. 154/1

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A Plain and Familiar

DISCOURSE

Humbly dedicated to

Reverend Dr. *Sacheverill*, &c.

HE that would be a true Heir apparent to the Church triumphant in Heaven, must first take care to approve himself a worthy Member of the Church militant on Earth; whose peculiar Qualifications are, to acknowledge and for ever to adore, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Divine Persons, but one Eternal and Omnipotent God; believing likewise at the same time one Community of Saints, or sincere Professors of Christianity dispers'd throughout the whole Globe of the Earth; one saving Faith; one Baptism, for the Remission of Sins; one propitiatory Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood; one appointed Hour of Death; one general Resurrection; one great Day of Judgment, when the whole Race of Mankind shall be oblig'd to give an Account of their Works done in the Flesh; one Heaven, to be the

everlasting Reward of the Righteous ; and one Hell, to punish wicked Reprobates to all Eternity.

He also owns there is one Rule of Life, for gaining the Conquest over Sin, and another Method to fall a Victim to Folly ; one Spirit of Love and Unity for Brethren, and another of inveterate Hatred and Discord ; one Manner of Confessing the Truth in Jesus, by a holy Life, and another of Deriding the Power of his Laws by a loose Conversation ; one Course tending to eternal Joys, and another to endless Pains ; one Way to be sav'd, and another to be damn'd ; one Discipline for obtaining the Favour of the ever-blessed Trinity, and another to lose the most comfortable Injoyment of the Beatifick Vision ; one Company of laborious faithful Ministers of the Gospel, who constantly Preach the sound Doctrine of true Holiness, Justice, Truth, Sobriety, Love, Christian Moderation, Forgiveness, and Long-suffering ; and another Pack of Supine *Levites*, that make it their main Business to promote Strife, Variance, Emulation, Persecution, Revenge, Schism and Discord amongst Brethren : One Party maintaining the Power of Godliness, by shunning Vice, and the other disowning the positive Commands of Heaven, by failing down

down the Stream of Iniquity : One Society of upright Christians complying with the Terms of the Gospel and the Laws of the Land, by doing Justice, loving Mercy, and walking humbly with their God : And another Tribe of false-hearted Hypocrites, or false Brethren, that make Rents in the Church, and Divisions in the State, by raising needless Disputes, Fews and Animosities, amongst Brethren of the same Community, tho' of somewhat different Perswasion.

And farther, He is very sensible, that there is one Body of Professors, who are religious, pure and holy ; and another of those that are dissolute, filthy and prophane : one Race of Men charitable, liberal and merciful ; and another hard-hearted, covetous and cruel : one familiar, affable and free ; another austere, arrogant and morose : one upright, just and true ; another deceitful, false and perfidious : one steady, firm and resolute ; another unstable, weak and fickle : one obliging, courteous and modest ; another imperious, disrespectful and insolent : one discreet, prudent and cautious ; another rash, foolish and unadvised : one adorn'd with Grace, Knowledge and Sagacity ; another stain'd with Vice, Ignorance and Stupidity : one meek, calm and gentle ; another hot, fiery and turbulent : one ready

to pass by Injuries, Affronts and Wrongs; another obstinately retaining Malice, Rancour and Ill-will: one frequent in Prayer, Meditation and Watching; another negligent in the Performance of known Duties, careless and sloathful: one diligent in hearing, observing and practising; another altogether taken up with idle talking, gazing and sleeping: in a Word, one Party whose Wills are resigned to the Divine Disposal, their vicious Inclinations mortified, and their unruly Passions subdu'd; and another that is continually rebellious, repining and fretful: And indeed whosoever will be saved, must have a true lively Faith, and an universal Charity; an even Temper and firm; a peaceable Mind, and a pure Soul; a Will obedient to the Dictates of Heaven, and holy Affections; a Zeal for the Promoting of God's Glory, and a Dread of Sin; an ardent Desire of taking the Kingdom of Heaven by force, and a cordial Love for its Institutions; a Heart impatiently desirous of Union, and longing for Peace.

They that stand as Candidates for a glorious Promotion in the future State, must be kind to all, hurtful to none, faithful to Friends, helpful to Enemies, slow to Wrath, and easie to be intreated, full of Good Works, and void of Evil Actions,

ons, having a quiet Conscience and a contented Mind; being dutiful to Parents, and loyal to Princes; free from Despise, Envy and Hatred; abstaining from Evil, and doing Good; abandoning Vice, and embracing Vertue; living one Day, as if he were to die the next; instructing the ignorant, and supporting the Weak; relieving the Poor, and cloathing the Naked; praying with the Sick, and visiting the Imprisoned; confirming the Pious, and reclaiming the Dissolute; vindicating the Orthodox, and confuting Hereticks; encouraging the Vertuous, and discountenancing the Ungodly; reproving the Disorderly, and admonishing the Negligent; they are also careful in regulating their own inordinate Affections, and subduing unruly Lusts; having a tender Conscience, and a sanctified Will; a meek Spirit, and an upright Heart; they are innocent in Life, and blameless in Conversation; rich in Grace, and abounding in good Works; contending for Glory, and affectionately loving the holy Jesus; they use few Words, and are void of Strife; but strong in the Lord, and mighty in his Power; hating Vanity, and despising Pride; being wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves; continually running the Race of Vertue, and pressing forward to obtain the Prize of the

high Calling of God : Whosoever uses his utmost Endeavours to be so qualify'd, and leads such a regular Life, is undoubtedly a genuine Son of Christ's holy Catholick Church ; for no sooner is a pious Person well grounded in the Principles of true Religion, but he immediately finds a thorow Change in the Frame of his Nature, and dares not any longer hold on in a needless Dispute concerning Forms and Modes of Divine Worship ; or so much as make an uncharitable Reflection upon any Community of Christians that can't joyn with him in every particular Nicety, or indifferent Ceremony, wisely considering, that where the holy Scriptures has not a Tongue to command or forbid any thing, the Matter is apparently left to the Arbitration of every Man's Conscience, as not being essentially necessary for Salvation ; however he knows it to be a Duty incumbent on all Christians, of what Perswasion so ever they may be, to make choice of such Persons for their Associates, as are pure in Spirit, moderate in Opinion, and adhere to the Essential Parts of Christ's reveal'd Religion ; neither is there any other Means by which they can attain to the true Knowledge of their Duty to God, their Neighbours, and themselves.

I made observation, that after the Decease of King *William* the Third, of ever blessed Memory, the Tory Tribe of Persecuting Brethren began to be fledg'd with their high-flying Feathers to soar up aloft, as it were so many rapacious Vultures, to seek their former Prey; so that the Consequence would have prov'd fatal to these three flourishing Kingdoms, had not the singular Wisdom of a sagacious and moderate Queen put a Stop to their hasty flight, and clipt their spreading Wings, by declaring she was resolv'd to maintain the Act of Toleration: However, notwithstanding so great a Mortification, numerous Flocks of these ravenous Birds of Prey are still fluttering up and down about the English Coasts to lay hold of a favourable Opportunity, to tear open our old Sores with their keen Bills, and revive our lamentable Dissentions, the dismal Effects of which have been apparently felt abroad among many of our Brethren of the Reformed Religion, insomuch that the Romanists, our common Enemies, have almost quite extirpated the very Name of a Protestant Church out of several neighbouring Countries.

And, I am afraid, the same Fate will soon overtake us, if not timely prevented, by suppressing those mighty *Nimrods*, who so
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eagerly seek to destroy this our *British Israel*; that is to say, all such that dress in the Railing Fashion, and are desirous to Lord it over tender Consciences with a persecuting Arrogance.

○ But, I hope, all sober Christians, endu'd with Understanding and Moderation, will from time to time put up their earnest Requests and Supplications at the Throne of Grace, that this Church and State may never be so unhappy for the future, as to be overtaken by a calamitous Time, when that pestilent Brood of Vipers shall Sway, as it happen'd in King *Charles* the Second's Time; but that we may all unanimously stand up for the Cause of God, the Queen, and the true Religion; preferring none to be imploy'd either in Church or State, but such as are well known to be sound in Doctrine, holy in Life, moderate in Spirit, and powerful in pulling down the Strong-holds of Vice; then we may expect to gain the Smiles of Heaven, the Favour of the Almighty, the Conquest over Sin, and a compleat Victory over our Enemies, both ghostly and temporal; so that this Land of our Nativity may flourish, and be continually refresh'd with overflowing Streams of Peace and Plenty.

'Tis

'Tis reported, that there are two remarkable Rivers in the Kingdom of *Hungary*, the Waters of which, altho' of different Qualities and Colours, amicably meet in one Channel, without disturbing each other, or without intermixing their pure elementary Substance, but roll together with one Consent towards the vast Ocean, only striving whose silent Streams may float it fastest down and arrive soonest at their appointed Stage, notwithstanding the Opposition of retrograde Eddies and swelling Surges, and whensoever their boistrous Enemies, I mean the stormy Winds, assault them in their Passage, they immediately bring up their united Forces of their provok'd Billows to stem the Tide against those impetuous Blasts, never insulting one another in the least with their proud Waves, troubled Waters, or different Temperatures.

Now what a Scandal is it for any religious Notaries, especially Protestants, to fall out by the Way into implacable Animosities among themselves or Brethren, and even at that very Instant when the bloody Papists are drawing up their numerous Forces in Battel-array, to destroy the Church, our holy Mother, and hew us down as a Victim to their unrelenting Cruelty, without the least Distinction of Persons, or Regard to any Party whatsoever. There-

Therefore if our several Pretentions are tending to Godliness and the common Interest of the Reformed Churches, let us joyn our Hands and Hearts together, as it were in Imitation of the two purling Rivulets but now mention'd, so as effectually to make head against our formidable Enemies, the grand Tyrants, and perfidious Disturbers of *Europe's* Peace; seriously considering, that we are all Brethren of the same pure Religion, with respect to the fundamental Articles of it, making Confession of one Catholick and Apostolick Faith, and all driving one Way, altho' we are not of the same Mind, Temperature or Complexion, in reference to the outward Forms of Divine Worship, nor ever shall be, as long as the Sun and Moon endure.

If the Case stand thus, why should we Parley or Wrangle on the heavenly King's Highway to *Sion*, about that which can never be absolutely defin'd or adjusted in this imperfect State.

However, let this be our Comfort, that the Matters in dispute amongst us are not worthy of much Notice, and do not interfere with our common Salvation; since all the Stir we make is only about a few Punctilio's of Church-Discipline, or Bodily Gestures, which ought not to extend to the Breach of Mutual Charity.

Upon the whole Matter, Let all upright, true-hearted Christians love one another with a cordial Sincerity, and an unlimited Affection, as the blessed Apostles did in the first Infancy of our holy Religion; altho' there were Controversies

troverfies fet on foot among them, which nevertheless did not in any wife difaffect their firm Belief in the Son of God, but were rais'd about Preheminence, and fome other Niceties of no great Importance, infomuch that our dear Saviour, the Prince of Peace, knowing their inward Thoughts, foon gave a Check to the Career of their hot Difputes, and moft prudently put them to Shame, by fetting a little Child in the midft of them, and of faying, *Of fuch is the Kingdom of Heaven*; meaning, that it was not expedient for his Apoftles and Followers to Difpute or Contend about any Matters, but thofe that were essentially neceffary to be known and practis'd in order to Salvation; the Sum of all which is fully comprehended in thefe three emphatical Sentences, viz. *To fear God, and keep his Commandments*; *To do to all, as we would be done by*; and, *To love one another with Chriftian Charity*.

Therefore I think it ought no longer be an occafion of Scandal or Offence, whether the Parifh-Minifter wears a Canonical Caffock, or a long Cloak; or a white Surplice, or a black Coat; whether he be a Preacher ordain'd by a Bifhop, or appointed by a Confiftory of Orthodox and Learned Divines; whether he deliver the lively Oracles of Truth in a Cathedral or a Parochial Church, or an obfcure Meeting-house; whether he bows to the Altar or the Name of Jefus, or ftands up at the Repetition of the Gofpels, or does not think fit to comply with thofe outward Ceremonies; whether he prays by a Form, or as the holy Spirit gives him Utterance; and in
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short, whether he be a Prelate or a Dean, an Archdeacon, or other dignify'd Clergy-man, or otherwise an inferior Priest or private Teacher.

These are things of no great moment, and do not belong to the substantial Articles of Religion; so that particular Community ought to strive, with an unweary'd Diligence, to shew which Party can make the best of their Way towards the Center of everlasting Rest, by Acts of Charity and Mercy, by Example and Precepts, by Life and Doctrine, by sound Arguments and meek Intreaties, by Loving-kindness and Gentleness of Temper, by Patience and Humility, by Prayers and Supplications, by Sobriety and Abstinence, by Watching and Fasting, by running the Race of Vertue and encountring spiritual Enemies, by kind Invitations and friendly Forbearance, by Mildness and Love, by Constancy and Perseverance, by a readiness to forget and forgive Injuries, by an honest Endeavour to avoid Errors and conniving at the Mistakes of others, by meeting Half-way and Complying, by Exhorting and Instructing, by Assisting and Supporting, by pardoning and not giving Offence, by contending for Glory and posting for Heaven, by circumspect Demeanour and wholesome Instructions, by Unity and Concord, by Regeneration and Repentance, by Long-suffering and putting on Bowels of Compassion.

Therefore if thou wouldest set up for an accomplished Christian, and have thy Actions approv'd by God and Man, take care that thou never giv'st way to the persecuting thy Fellow-travellers in the unerring Paths of Religion, because
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they cannot deress their Conscience for Heaven in that Fashion which is most conformable to thy capricious Humour, or perhaps decline to comply with thy private Interest.

Are there any particular Societies within the Pale of Christ's Catholick Church who have just Grounds to believe their Perswasion or Opinion to be more orthodox and sound than any other? Let them give God the Praise that they can adorn their Souls for the meeting of the great Bridegroom in the heavenly Mansions, by the help of a truer Divinity-glass than the rest of Mankind; and for the future, let them not be so ungenteel as to brand any Community with foul Names, upon the account of past Failings or late Offences: For if they do but make an impartial Scrutiny into the Miscarriages of their own Party, and turn over the Records of a few Years, I'm afraid they'll find sufficient cause to lay their Hands on their Mouths, and say with regret, *We have all taken our Turns to Persecute one another.*

O what shall we do unto thee, O thou Preserver of Men? By what Means can we retrieve our Honour, or attain Salvation, unless it be by immediately repenting of our enormitous Transgressions, by loosing the Bands of Unrighteousness, and shewing Mercy one to another?

In the mean while I hope it will not be taken ill, if I plainly tell the two contending Parties, that if any Person, of what Order, Degree or Perswasion soever he may be, shall presume for the future, to Revile, Reproach, Bespatter or Persecute either of the said Parties, by Preaching, Discourſing, Writing, or otherwise, in
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my Opinion, ought no more be accounted a Member of either of these two most excellent Bodies of Christian Professors, than a Turk, a Pagan or Infidel. Nay, be it proclaim'd henceforth through our British Islands, that I had much rather hear the Heavens roaring with dreadful Peals of Thunder, or behold them set all over on a Flame, by amazing Flashings of Lightning, than to see one that pretends to be a Minister, standing aloft in the Courts of God, foaming at the Mouth, and belching forth virulent Invectives against any particular Church and People who subscribe by their Orthodox Confession of Faith, to the fundamental Articles of the Christian Religion and the positive Commands of the ever-blessed Jesus, the eternal Author of it; For such opprobrious Terms are nothing else but the Language of Hell, devis'd by the Enemy of Mankind, on purpose to undermine the Foundation of all solid and real Religion to turn it into a Heap of Delusions, Lies and Shadows, to imbroider its Professors with incurable Dissentions, all which direful Effects of the Diabolical Malice are already visible amongst us, and I fear will be soon compleated, unless we immediately intomb all our old Grudges and new-started Heats in the Land of Oblivion, changing our endless Jars and needless Disputes into the peaceable Practice of Piety and Christian Love.

Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, for the sake of the ever-blessed Jesus, the eternally belov'd Son of his Bosom; and may all the genuine Sons of Christ's holy Church reverently prostrate themselves before the Divine Glory, saying, Amen.

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